

REMARKS

This Amendment and Reply seeks to place this application in condition for allowance. In an Office Action dated December 9, 2004 (the "Office Action"), the Examiner identifies two distinct inventions, namely Group I, including claims 1-31, and Group II, including claims 32-64.

Applicants hereby elect Group II, claims 32-64, without traverse.

In the Office Action it is stated that the undersigned made a provisional election to prosecute Group 1 (claims 1-31). However, the undersigned recalls that Group II was provisionally elected. As such, in this response, Applicants have formally elected to pursue, in this application, claims 32-64.

The non-elected claims (i.e., claims 1-31) have been canceled, without prejudice. Accordingly, those claims have been withdrawn from consideration in this application at this time. Applicants reserve the right to present the same or similar inventive subject matter in this application, at a later date, or in a divisional application.

In addition, certain of the claims have been amended to more clearly describe the invention, to improve grammar, to correct inadvertent typographical errors, and/or to more fully protect the inventions described and illustrated in the application. None of these amendments were motivated by patentability considerations in view of the prior art. No new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

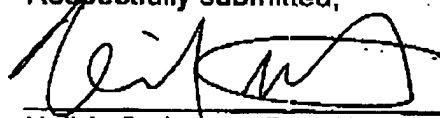
Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendments and consideration of the claimed invention on the merits. Applicants submit that all of the

pending claims present patentable subject matter. Accordingly, allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

It is noted that should a telephone interview expedite the prosecution of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Date: December 20, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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